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PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR PROFESSIONALS IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES.

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TWO 2-YEAR COLLEGES, ONE WITH AND ONE WITHOUT A MERIT INCENTIVE SYSTEM FOR SALARY AND STATUS ADVANCEMENT, WERE COMPARED IN TERMS OF FACULTY PARTICIPATION IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS. THE TWO COLLEGES WERE SIMILAR IN EVERY RESPECT EXCEPT FOR THEIR ADVANCEMENT SYSTEM. THE MERIT COLLEGE (MC) USED FACULTY ACADEMIC TITLES AND PROMOTED FACULTY MEMBERS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM HIGHER ECHELON FACULTY MEMBERS BASED ON THE INDIVIDUAL'S PERFORMANCE OF DUTY. THE NONMERIT COLLEGE (NMC) LABELED EVERYONE "INSTRUCTOR," USED AUTOMATIC ANNUAL SALARY INCREMENTS, AND HAD NO FORMALLY INSTITUTIONALIZED ALLOCATION OF REWARDS AND PENALTIES. BOTH COLLEGES HAD TWO BASIC INSTITUTIONAL OBJECTIVES--(1) COUNSELING STUDENTS AND (2) PROVIDING CULTURAL AND EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR THE COMMUNITY. THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY SHOWED THAT (1) 67 PERCENT OF THE MC'S STAFF PARTICIPATED IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, WHEREAS ONLY 54 PERCENT OF NMC'S STAFF DID SO, (2) "MOONLIGHTING" WAS DONE BY 75 PERCENT IN NMC AND BY ONLY 46 PERCENT IN MC, AND (3) STUDENT COUNSELING WAS NAMED AS A REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITY BY 41 PERCENT OF THE MC STAFF AND BY ONLY 10 PERCENT OF THE NMC STAFF. IN GENERAL, IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT THE INCENTIVE FOR FACULTY PURSUIT OF INSTITUTIONAL GOALS IS GREATER IN COLLEGES WITH A MERIT ADVANCEMENT SYSTEM. THIS PAPER WAS PRESENTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PACIFIC SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (VANCOUVER, CANADA, APRIL 8, 1966). (HW)

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PROVIDING INCENTIVES FOR PROFESSIONALS IN TWO-YEAR COLLEGES: A Case Study of Two Approaches and Their Relative Effectiveness in Securing Service and Client Oriented Behavior*

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INTRODUCTION

Formal organizations, including those which employ professionals, are faced with the problem of gaining the cooperation of workers in pursuing activities that are presumed to lead to goal accomplishment. Barnard recognized that not all of the objectives which a particular organization might seek to achieve would be consonant with the motives of even a majority of the individual participants when he stated:

> The egotistical motives of self-preservation and self-gratification are dominating forces; on the whole, organizations can exist only when consistent with the satisfaction of these motives, unless, alternatively, they can change these motives. The individual is always the basic strategic factor in organizations. Regardless of his history or his obligations he must be induced to cooperate, or there can be no cooperation ...The contributions of personal efforts which constitute the energies of organizations are yielded by individuals because of incentives. [1]

According to this view, incentives constitute the means by which formal organizations elicit cooperation. One writer defined incentives as "The usual motivating instrumentalities used by formal organizations to elicit the cooperation from workers necessary to get them to enact their roles...which will make possible the achievement of the tasks

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*Material for this paper has been extracted from Herman Arnold Wallin, "The Dynamics of Incentive Systems: A Comparative Study of Variations in Professionalism in Two Institutions of Higher Learning." An unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, September, 1965.

of the organization."[2] Incentives may range from such tangible inducements as money, things, and physical conditions to such intangibles as status, and mutual support in personal beliefs. Indeed, the incentive system is seen by some as the principal variable affecting organizational behavior. Clark and Wilson recently advanced the proposition that:

> All viable organizations must provide tangible or intangible incentives to individuals in exchange for contributions of individual activity to the organization...Many (kinds of) incentives are offered to satisfy the variety of motives that help to maintain participation in the enterprise.[3]

Not only, it appears, must organizations provide incentives to elicit the cooperation of workers necessary to get them to enact their roles in the organizational structure (which will make possible the achievement of organizational tasks), but the incentives must appeal to the diverse motivations of the participants. Kornhauser proposes a generalization which seems to sum up the discussion to this point:

> Only insofar as there are different types of incentives to link appropriate orientations to the several functions of a (given)...organization can it command satisfactory levels of participation from its members.[4]

One of the basic problems which every organization must solve, it follows, is the matching of the orientations of the participants with their organizational roles. Hence the cruciality of the incentive system in mediating the dilemma that arises when there is incomplete articulation of personality and organization.[5]

THE PROBLEM

Matching is rarely possible, however. Organizations which employ professionals, as a case in point, appear to have conflicting orientations "built-in" to the organizational structure -- orientations that

resist resolution. Organizational goals, for example, often differ from those of a professionally oriented participant. La Porte points out that industrial goals, as an illustration, are centered upon profit making. Because these more general goals are never immediately achieved, a series of intermediate objectives or means become the object of attention. La Porte speculates that to the degree these more immediate objectives are consonant with the goals of the professional so will there exist a functional relationship.[6] Where there is a lack of congruence between immediate organizational objectives and the goals of professional employees the question arises whether or not appropriate incentives would accommodate the resulting conflict in orientation. There is some evidence to suggest that certain of the conflicts that scientists working in industrial organizations experience can be reduced through, among other ways, the introduction of an appropriate career route.[7] One group of findings from a comparative case study carried out by this writer[8] among professionals in two-year colleges suggests that a merit-type incentive system is more successful than a non-merit type system in securing cooperation in the rendering of services which receive low priority among teaching staffs, though college officials view such services as essential.

THE STUDY

THE SETTING

For many public two-year colleges, especially those which derive their financial support principally from the surrounding community, there are at least two areas (in addition to teaching) which receive emphasis in statements of institutional objectives. One of those areas concerns the immediate client - the student. Faculty members are expected to provide counsel to students on matters ranging from curriculum

and career alternatives to study habits.[9] This expectation is over and above the formal guidance and counseling program each college maintains through a special full-time staff. The other of the two areas concerns the secondary clients - the tax paying public, the stockholders. The two-year college makes available to the non-student population of the surrounding area both cultural and educational programs in what is claimed to be an attempt to "maximize the returns of public investment."[10] Providing a non-credit evening course in art history at the request of the local sketch club or encouraging faculty members to participate in the life of the local community would be cases in point.

Professionals in two-year colleges do not seem to be as committed, however, to objectives such as community service and student guidance as they are to teaching college-level credit courses to full-time students. Thus, non-teaching activities are likely to be viewed as ancillary and worthy of only nominal support. Studies of two-year college faculties reveal considerable divergence of opinion among various segments with respect to priority of purposes.[11] Administrators, for example, are much more wedded to the non-teaching goals than are teachers. Full-time student counselors see counseling as a more crucial activity than do instructors, and instructors tend to place more emphasis upon "regular" courses in their particular areas than upon remedial and non-credit offerings.

To gain data on the impact various types of incentives would have upon mediating incongruence in an educational setting two colleges, one utilizing a merit-type of incentive system, Merit College, the other a non-merit incentive system, Non-Merit College, were selected for study.[12] Merit College assigns to its faculty academic titles, each

of which has its own salary scale. As in the case of many universities, neither salary advancement nor advancement in rank is automatic. Advancement is contingent, rather, upon receiving satisfactory performance evaluations from higher echelon colleagues. Ratings are given each year and are concerned with the performance of those services the college wishes to emphasize: teaching, counseling, and community service, to mention three. Non-Merit College has no "formally institutionalized allocation of rewards and penalties to enhance compliance with (its) norms, regulations, and orders."[13] It has no career ladder for the professional staff: all are labelled "instructor" irrespective of their function or competence. Annual salary increments are automatic until a maximum (based upon amount of training) has been reached: neither the quality nor the quantity of performance is a factor except in a few extreme instances. By earning additional graduate credits from some institution of higher learning (through part-time study, for example) a new maximum is thereby attainable. The highest salaries and a differentiation in title go to those who perform non-teaching functions: deans, directors, and other administrative officers.

DESIGN

Data with which to assess the response of instructors in the two colleges to the two different types of incentive systems were gathered over a three-month period in 1965, by means of interview, observation, and documentary analysis. Within each of the college's teaching divisions, the faculty were stratified by seniority (non-tenured, tenured) and a 38% proportional, stratified, sequential sample was drawn.

In selecting the colleges care was taken to find two institutions that were comparable in as many respects as possible (with the exception of their formal incentive structure): cultural and educational climate - 25 miles distance between the two colleges; size - 1850 full-time students as compared with 1800; faculty - 119 as compared with 111; programs - both offered lower division work leading to the A.B. degree as well as more specialized occupational curricula which could be completed within a two-year time span; quality of offerings - both were fully accredited and students completing their junior years there could transfer without loss of credit to any of the leading state universities.

Both colleges had similar governing structures: lay boards of trustees, an appointed administration headed by a president, and a faculty senate responsible to the professional teaching staff. The authority vested in the administration of one college was neither more nor less than that vested in the other by virtue of state regulations and the existence of active faculty senates. The balance in the two faculties between males and females, between various levels of academic preparation and types of previous teaching experience was comparable. Self-selection of the faculty on the basis of a preference for one type of incentive system over another appeared not to be operating: fewer than 5% in either college could recall having prior knowledge of the type of incentive system that their particular college used. Not only did both schools have a similar financial capability, they both spent similar amounts of money, as measured by per capita expenditures.

THE FINDINGS

Both colleges encouraged their staffs by means of policy statements contained in faculty handbooks to participate in the public life of

their respective communities. During the semi-structured interviews faculty were asked about the community activities in which they were involved in the previous two years.

Table One

A Comparison of the Number of Faculty Who Participate In Community Service Activities

	Non-Merit College	Merit College	N
	%	%	
Indicated some activity during previous 2 years	54 (26)	67 (26)	52
No community activity in previous 2 years	46 (22)	33 (13)	35
	100% (48)	100% (39)	87

$X^2 = 3.6$ df = 1 $P < .06$

Some 67% of MC's staff had engaged in some form of community activity in the past two years as compared with 54% of NMC's. Activities included such non-remunerative acts as speaking engagements, holding an executive office in a community agency, or serving in some voluntary capacity such as a community chest canvasser. The variation in the level of voluntary participation in local activities, between the two groups, though significant statistically, is not as pronounced, however, as the variations in "moonlighting" kinds of activities.

One might expect to find that professionals who accept employment in a college which is oriented toward community service would tend not to seek out part-time employment opportunities. Such jobs would reduce the amount of time that would normally be available for community projects and the amount of time and energy a teacher would have left to give to his primary occupation. Moreover, moonlighting activities of two-year college staffs cannot be likened to the entrepreneurial careers

of many university faculty where outside jobs are frequently related to their areas of expertise. The outside activities for purposes of this present study included operating a vending machine concession, selling insurance and real estate, and directing a remedial reading clinic for children of grammar school age, to mention a few. Also included in this general category of "outside activity" is teaching in the evening division. However, only teachers who were not contractually obligated to teach in the evening division and who reported that the choice of assuming additional teaching responsibilities for additional salary was completely their own are included.

Table Two

A Comparison of the Number of Faculty Who Engage In Outside Remunerative Activities

	Non-Merit College	Merit College	N
	%	%	
Indicated outside employment for additional remuneration:			
(1) Evening College Teaching	44 (21)	31 (12)	33
(2) Other types of activities	25 (12)	10 (4)	16
(3) Both teaching and other	6 (3)	5 (2)	5
Indicated no outside employment for additional remuneration	25 (12)	54 (21)	33
	100% (48)	100% (39)	87

$X^2 = 17.6$ df = 1 $P < .001$

The data show that Non-Merit College faculty were more actively involved in moonlighting-type jobs than were the faculty members at Merit College: 75% as compared with 46%. Some 54% at MC as compared with 25% at NMC indicated no outside employment for which added remuneration was received.

So far the presentation has reported on data which compare the two college faculties with respect to their participation in activities that are associated with community service and in activities which could have the effect of reducing the amount of time available for community service. Though community service is not seen by most faculty members as an important dimension of their total professional obligation, it is apparent that teachers in Merit College respond more positively than do their counterparts in Non-Merit College to the urging of two-year college boards and administrators on this matter. Before attempting to show how such a variation could be a function of different provisions of the incentive systems, data with respect to student counseling activities will be presented.

A second activity, student counseling, receives only nominal support from most two-year college staff, though college handbooks insist that counseling is the responsibility of all teachers. Non-Merit College provides each of their instructors with the following statement:

> Hold office hours for student consultation, allowing if possible, at least one hour a day for this purpose. Counsel students whenever there is an opportunity, recognizing that the individual teacher often has the finest opportunity for guiding individual students.

Merit College's statement is similar:

> A teaching load should allow time outside that spent in classroom instruction...for individual student contacts, where counseling and extra assistance can be available...one hour a day plus other hours as needed.

Little evidence was obtained while on campus to suggest that teachers at NMC kept regular office hours for the benefit of students. Certainly no documents or schedule was available that listed office hours, nor were hours posted on the doors. MC, on the other hand, had available for each semester the timetable of every faculty member,

including a listing of office hours. According to this schedule the average for the whole faculty at MC was 5.45 hours per week.

In addition to this observational type of evidence, data was secured from faculty members by asking them, during the interviews, to describe their teaching assignment as well as any other responsibilities they were expected to assume - responsibilities such as club sponsorships, committee memberships, student counseling, and so forth. Table Three indicates that of the teachers interviewed at NMC some 10% named counseling as one of their regular weekly activities as compared with 41% of MC's interviewees.

Table Three

A Comparison of the Number of Faculty Who Named Student Counseling as a Weekly Responsibility

	Non-Merit College	Merit College	N
	%	%	
Named student counseling as one of several weekly responsibilities	10 (5)	41 (16)	21
Did not name student counseling as a weekly responsibility	90 (43)	59 (23)	66
	100% (48)	100% (39)	87

$X^2 = 22.6$ df = 1 $P < .001$

DISCUSSION

The principals in this study, the professional staffs and the organizations which sought their services, held different views regarding the importance of two objectives public two-year colleges espouse, namely, student counseling and community service. One of the colleges, Merit College, seemed to be more successful in eliciting from its instructors cooperation in those two fields. Three features unique to the MC system appear to be largely responsible for its greater capability.

(1) Evaluation Machinery. The staff at MC receives each year written performance evaluations from a team of senior colleagues. These evaluations provide "feedback" not only on how strong (or weak) the committee believes an individual's contribution to be, but, more importantly, what priorities does the college assign to particular activities. Apart from a major evaluation of the work at the end of the first year of a beginning instructor at NMC, no regularized machinery exists. Comments from the interview data will help to illustrate how the regular evaluations of MC served to articulate the college's objectives to its work-force. The lack of feedback at NMC seemed to give rise to the feeling by faculty that no one cared what they did.

> (From NMC) When I began teaching here, I was told that we should devote some time to student counseling. At first I did but I was about the only one. I guess it can't be that important. It's hard to tell - no one mentions it.

> (From MC) I'm trying to allocate my time differently this year so that I can give some time to a recently organized coordinating council for cultural activities in our city. The college has encouraged me to become more active in such affairs, believing that I have the ability to make such a contribution.

(2) Rewards and penalties. Both salary and status advancement are given to those at MC who are judged to be effectively carrying out the purposes of that college. For those whose services are judged to be exceptionally outstanding, early promotions in rank are not uncommon. NMC's program of guaranteed rewards irrespective of either the quality or quantity of the services being rendered, seemed to act as a depressant which dulled the professional orientations of many faculty. In the case of MC staff, there is always present the prospect that the college might withhold a salary or rank advancement. This possibility encouraged instructors to be more aware of the expectations Merit College held for them.

(From NMC) I do very little beyond the actual teaching of my courses. I do teach in the evening division to supplement my income, though. Between those two jobs and looking after my back-yard greenhouse I just can't get enthusiastic about coaching a lot of students who aren't ready to be in college anyway.

(From MC) One of the things I like about this place is that those who are interested in doing a better job get some recognition. At my previous school I knew I could go only so far salary wise if I didn't get my master's degree. While having a master's degree is still important here, they do recognize (other types of contributions). Even though I didn't earn any more graduate credit hours, I still got a raise for taking the time to work with students who need extra help.

(3) A career route for teachers. The existence of MC's career route makes it possible for instructors to advance professionally without having to change occupations, as it were. "Up" at NMC means "out", for that college has no graduated career path for its staff. The one path that it does have (from teaching into administrative work), which it rewards with both increased status and salary, tends to tilt the energies of many faculty members away from their primary obligations.

(From NMC) Why take guidance courses during the summer? Actually, they might come in handy sometime. There's more money in full-time guidance work on this campus than in teaching physics, you know.

(From MC) Administration courses? I haven't taken any administration courses. I'm in geology...I have trouble keeping up in that field much less branching out. At any rate, it wouldn't help my future here. If I keep up my present record, I've been told, I'll make the associateship next year.

Merit College, through the provisions contained in its incentive system, is able to give tangible evidence that it does matter whether its faculty participates in community activities; it does matter whether an instructor devotes time to student counseling. The college is able to recognize such contributions and reward them; they do not go unnoticed by "significant others". The professionals at Non-Merit College found it extremely easy to "explain" their inactivity in community service

and student counseling by a shrug and a "Who cares?" type of comment. They had soon noticed that minimal effort yielded the same economic and status returns as did service "over and beyond the call of duty". The norm of equality which so permeated NMC's incentive system elicited a "lowest common denominator" response from the faculty.

For organization analysts and students of the professions the study raises several questions which call for a more rigorous treatment:

1. To what extent do professionals in other bureaucratic settings carry out their assignments voluntarily by having internalized their obligations? To what extent are they responsive (or unresponsive) to such organizational incentives as salary and status designations?

2. What are the bases for the sensitiveness various professional groups evince toward performance evaluation? Do the bases differ from one profession to another?

As the number of professionals who work in complex organizations increase, there is an ever growing need to learn more about the organizational conditions under which these workers are best able to perform. From the preliminary data gathered in this study it would seem that appropriate incentives can assist the professional teacher in establishing priorities among his various tasks such that there emerges a more functional relationship between him and his employing institution. Thus, incentive systems appear to be not the least of the organizational conditions which are deserving of closer attention.

NOTES

1. Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 139.

2. Richard C. Lonsdale, "Maintaining the Organization in Dynamic Equilibrium," in Daniel E. Griffiths (ed.), Behavorial Science and Educational Administration, Sixty-third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 161.

3. Peter B. Clark and James Q. Wilson, "Incentive Systems: A Theory of Organizations," Administrative Science Quarterly, 6 (1961), pp. 130, 150.

4. William Kornhauser, Scientists in Industry: Conflict and Accommodation (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), p. 130.

5. "If personalities could be shaped to fit specific organizational roles, or organizational roles to fit specific personalities, many of the pressures to displace goals, much of the need to control performance, and a good part of the alienation would disappear. Such matching is, of course, as likely as an economy without scarcity and hence without prices." Amitai Etzioni, Modern Organizations (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), p. 75.

6. Todd R. LaPorte, "Conditions of Strain and Accommodation in Industrial Research Organizations," Administrative Science Quarterly, 10 (June, 1965), pp. 22-26.

7. See particularly Kornhauser, op.cit., "Professional Incentives in Industry," chapter V, pp. 117-157.

8. Herman Arnold Wallin, "The Dynamics of Incentive Systems: A Comparative Study of Variations in Professionalism in Two Institutes of Higher Learning.' An unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Berkeley, September, 1965.

9. One such statement reads: "It is the specific responsibility of every junior college to assist its students to discover their own capabilities and limitations. A program of education and guidance should be provided so that every student may discover his aptitudes, choose a life work, and prepare for the successful pursuit of such work."

10. A typical statement from a college catalogue: "(The purposes of this college are:) ...to provide service for the people of the community by offering lectures, forums, plays, concerts, and exhibits, and other cultural activities."

11. An example is the one carried out by Leland L. Medsker, The Junior College: Progress and Prospect (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960). See Chapter Seven, "Faculty Attitudes in the Role of the Two-Year College," pp. 169-205. The question of weakly established values in another context, adult education schools, are the subject of study reported by Burton R. Clark, "Organizational Adaptation and Precarious Values: A Case Study," American Sociological Review, 21 (June, 1956), pp. 327-336.

12. Names of both persons and places have been granted anonymity, despite the limitations thus placed upon proof.

13. Amitai Etzioni, "Organizational Control Structure," in James G. March (ed.), Handbook of Organization (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1965), p. 650.